

# Or Chadash FOCUS



*By Rabbi Alison B. Kobey*

Counting. We do it a lot in Judaism. The Torah has various passages about counting people, counting measurements, counting moments, counting offerings, and counting other objects. We still do it in the modern age as well- counting for a minyan (minimum of 10 Jewish adults to do a full service), counting of objects, counting of people (everyone counts and adds an element of specialness in our community!).

One of the lesser known traditions within the Reform movement is the counting that occurs between Passover and Shavuot. It is called the Counting of the Omer and comes from Leviticus 23:15-16 “And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering (the omer) ...you shall count off seven weeks. They must be complete. You must count until the day after the seventh week fifty days; then you shall bring an offering of new grain to the Eternal.”

The S’firat HaOmer, or counting of the omer, spans the 49 days between the second day of Passover and the beginning of Shavuot. Thus, there is a link between the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah at Sinai. In 70 CE, when the Second Temple was destroyed, there was no more omer (or any) offering, and the Reform movement shifted away from the Counting of the Omer. But, what if we went back to the counting? Not because we are looking to go back to the time of sacrifices or offerings, but rather because we need a reminder of not only our physical freedom but our spiritual freedom as well. The counting serves as a sacred link that I would argue is especially needed in today’s day and age when so many of us are busier than ever. The counting occurs at night and is short. Curious? E-mail me and I would be happy to give you the blessing and formula for the Counting of the Omer.

(continued on page 4)

## **SHABBAT SCHEDULE**

**April 5** - No Shabbat Services. Invite some COC people to your house and have a lovely, relaxing Shabbat at home.

**April 6** - 10:00am Shabbat Services with Bat Mitzvah of Maddie Kwasny

**April 12** - 7:30pm Shabbat Services with Birthday Blessings

**April 13** - 10:00am Shabbat Services with Bat Mitzvah of Gabrielle Dwoskin

**April 19** - 5:00pm Short Shabbat Services and then go home for Seder

**April 26** - 7:30pm Shabbat Services with Or Chadash Singers, Anniversary Blessings, and a taste of Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) liturgy and Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day)

**May 3** - No Shabbat Services. Invite some COC people to your house and have a lovely, relaxing Shabbat at home.

**May 4** - 10:00am Shabbat Services with Bat Mitzvah of Emma Ward

**May 10** - 7:30pm Shabbat Services with Teacher Appreciation, Birthday Blessings, and game night oneg

**May 17** - 7:30pm Shabbat Services with Anniversary Blessings

**May 18** - 10:00am Shabbat Services with Bar Mitzvah of Joshua Wolfson

**May 24** - 7:30pm Shabbat Services

**May 31** - No Shabbat Services. Invite some COC people to your house and have a lovely, relaxing Shabbat at home.

**June 1** - 9:00am Shabbat Services with Birthday Blessings

# Contacting Us



**Rabbi**

Rabbi Alison Kobey 301-482-1025

[rabbikobey@gmail.com](mailto:rabbikobey@gmail.com)

**Cantorial Soloist**

Deborah Sternberg

[sternbed@gmail.com](mailto:sternbed@gmail.com)

**Location**

24800 Kings Valley Road

Damascus, MD 20872

**Office Hours**

Tuesday - Friday

9:00am to 2:00pm

**E-mail Address:**

[orchadashadmin@gmail.com](mailto:orchadashadmin@gmail.com)

**Mailing Address**

24800 Kings Valley Rd

Damascus, MD 20872

**Web Address**

[www.cong-orchadashmd.org](http://www.cong-orchadashmd.org)

**Telephone and FAX**

(T) 301-482-1025

(F) 301-482-1027

**To Receive E-mail Updates**

Send your e-mail address to

[orchadashadmin@gmail.com](mailto:orchadashadmin@gmail.com)

## Contact Us

<b>Religious School Director</b> .....	Rabbi Alison Kobey .....	301-482-1025 .....	<a href="mailto:rabbikobey@gmail.com">rabbikobey@gmail.com</a>
<b>Temple Administrator</b> .....	Bitia Silverman .....	301-482-1025 .....	<a href="mailto:orchadashadmin@gmail.com">orchadashadmin@gmail.com</a>
<b>Religious School Administrator</b> .....	OPEN .....	301-482-1025 .....	<a href="mailto:principal.orchadash@gmail.com">principal.orchadash@gmail.com</a>
<b>President</b> .....	Phil Dicken .....	301-926-7825 .....	<a href="mailto:phil.dicken@gmail.com">phil.dicken@gmail.com</a>
<b>Vice-President</b> .....	Andrew Felrice .....	301-515-8570 .....	<a href="mailto:afelrice@yahoo.com">afelrice@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b> .....	Andrew Colby .....	See Directory .....	<a href="mailto:orchadashmd.treasurer@gmail.com">orchadashmd.treasurer@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b> .....	Karen Dean .....	301-351-2457 .....	<a href="mailto:bkrsdean@me.com">bkrsdean@me.com</a>
<b>Immediate Past President</b> .....	Karen Conner .....	301-540-1567 .....	<a href="mailto:ksuecon76@gmail.com">ksuecon76@gmail.com</a>
<b>At-Large</b> .....	Matt Dwoskin .....	301-874-2343 .....	<a href="mailto:dwoskin@gmail.com">dwoskin@gmail.com</a>
.....	Rob Eisenberg .....	301-253-1922 .....	<a href="mailto:rjseisenberg@comcast.net">rjseisenberg@comcast.net</a>
.....	Ray Lessans .....	301-840-8019 .....	<a href="mailto:raylessans@gmail.com">raylessans@gmail.com</a>
.....	Ilene Krom .....	240-477-9902 .....	<a href="mailto:kromfamily726@gmail.com">kromfamily726@gmail.com</a>
.....	Laura Sardilli .....	301-540-4610 .....	<a href="mailto:laurasardilli@yahoo.com">laurasardilli@yahoo.com</a>
.....	Fran Zavin .....	301-540-7675 .....	<a href="mailto:bubbyfran@outlook.com">bubbyfran@outlook.com</a>
.....	Phil Zeidman .....	301-947-0728 .....	<a href="mailto:thezeidmans@mac.com">thezeidmans@mac.com</a>
<b>CORY President</b> .....	Seth Gussow .....	See Temple Directory	
<b>CORY Advisor</b> .....	Hannah Robin .....	301-482-1025 .....	<a href="mailto:orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com">orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com</a>
<b>Jr. CORY Advisor</b> .....	Hannah Robin .....	301-482-1025 .....	<a href="mailto:orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com">orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com</a>
<b>Kiddish Kids</b> .....	Hannah Robin .....	301-482-1025 .....	<a href="mailto:orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com">orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com</a>
<b>WCOC/Sisterhood President</b> .....	Ellyn Baum .....	301-972-0075 .....	<a href="mailto:iamellyn527@aol.com">iamellyn527@aol.com</a>
<b>Brotherhood President</b> .....	OPEN		
<b>Adult Social Group</b> .....	Joe Baum .....	301-233-7482 .....	<a href="mailto:jesaz99@aol.com">jesaz99@aol.com</a>
<b>Ritual Committee</b> .....	OPEN		
<b>Jewish Living &amp; Learning Comm.</b> .....	Donna & Coleman Clarke .....	240-344-8412 .....	<a href="mailto:clarke86@comcast.net">clarke86@comcast.net</a>
<b>Library Committee</b> .....	Michael Abrahams .....	301-428-1025 .....	<a href="mailto:mlabrahams@gmail.com">mlabrahams@gmail.com</a>
<b>Membership Committee</b> .....	OPEN		
<b>Fundraising Committee</b> .....	Debbie Lessans .....	202-438-2042 .....	<a href="mailto:deblessans@gmail.com">deblessans@gmail.com</a>
.....	Melissa Lebedinsky .....	301-947-4881 .....	<a href="mailto:melebed@gmail.com">melebed@gmail.com</a>
<b>Social Action Committee</b> .....	Rita Shewbridge .....	240-812-9233 .....	<a href="mailto:Rita.Shewbridge@gmail.com">Rita.Shewbridge@gmail.com</a>
<b>Religious School Committee</b> .....	Howard Benowitz .....	301-947-4056 .....	<a href="mailto:benowitz@comcast.net">benowitz@comcast.net</a>
<b>Chesed Committee</b> .....	Donna & Coleman Clarke .....	240-344-8412 .....	<a href="mailto:clarke86@comcast.net">clarke86@comcast.net</a>
<b>Building Committee</b> .....	Matt Dwoskin .....	301-874-2343 .....	<a href="mailto:dwoskin@gmail.com">dwoskin@gmail.com</a>
<b>Oneg Coordinator</b> .....	Julie Swain .....	301-916-9214 .....	<a href="mailto:juliebs1@aol.com">juliebs1@aol.com</a>
<b>FOCUS Editor</b> .....	Debbie Eisenberg .....	301-253-1922 .....	<a href="mailto:rjseisenberg@comcast.net">rjseisenberg@comcast.net</a>
<b>Webmaster</b> .....	Marti Kerner .....	202-957-9540 .....	<a href="mailto:martha.kerner@gmail.com">martha.kerner@gmail.com</a>
<b>Dues or Tuition Relief</b> .....	Andrew Colby .....	See Temple Directory	

# Torah Parashiyot (and Writings)

Upcoming Parashiyot and some of the many topics to consider:

(Starting in June, there was general consensus that if we cannot have Torah study on a Saturday, we would have that Torah portion as a make-up on a Sunday)

**April 20 – 9:30am- Tazria and Metzora**  
(catch-up from last couple of weeks)  
**(Leviticus 12:1-15:33)** Why are boundaries so important? If someone needs to provide a sin offering, does it mean the person always does something wrong? How do we handle people who are different? Is it okay that our impulse is to isolate the afflicted?

**April 27 – 9:30am Song of Songs-**  
The traditional text from Writings read on Passover

**May 11 – 9:30am- Aharei Mot and Kedoshim**  
(catch-up from last couple of weeks)  
**(Leviticus 16:1-20:27)** How do we compare the Yom Kippur of Torah to today? If a place is impure, does God leave? Do we fulfill the holiness code today? What are we doing to love our neighbor?

**May 25 – 9:30am- Emor and Behar**  
(catch-up from last couple of weeks)  
**(Leviticus 21:1-26:2)** What does Sukkot teach us? Can you be joyous for a holiday after the power of Yom Kippur? What is the point of counting the omer? What is the meaning of Shabbat? Why is God so frustrated?



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*By Rabbi Alison B. Kobey (continued)*

I challenge all of us (myself included) to Count the Omer this year and to be intentional every evening in giving ourselves a brief moment of spiritual connection to the day. I wonder if at the end of the counting, we will feel more spiritual, whether closer to God or to Torah or to our ancestors. And, maybe, the counting will strengthen us. If you want, you can even culminate the act by joining us on Shavuot, **June 8** this year. Good luck in the Rabbi challenge! Who is in?!

*L'Shalom,  
Rabbi Alison B. Kobey*

**President's Column**

**Save the date:** Our annual meeting will be held on Wednesday, **May 22** at 7:30pm in the Sanctuary. We will be voting on our annual budget and the board of directors' slate. Please plan to attend in person. If you are unable to attend, please make sure to send in your proxy vote.

As you probably have seen by now, the congregation is finally completely rid of the mold in the building and all repairs are complete. I especially would like to thank the building committee, led by Matt Dwoskin. Please take the time to review the letter mailed to you regarding our current financial situation and consider making a contribution. If you have not seen a copy of the letter, please send me an email at [Phil.Dicken@gmail.com](mailto:Phil.Dicken@gmail.com). For those of you who have already made a contribution, I thank you!

We are now collecting nominations for the board of directors for the next fiscal year. I have found the time that I have spent on the board to be very fulfilling and rewarding. It is a chance for me to give back to my community while building friendships that I hope will last a lifetime.

If you have any interest in serving on the board, please contact Karen Connor or Andrew Felrice.

As I've been mentioning, we are in serious need of a new treasurer. We **must** fill this role to remain a viable entity. To be most successful in this role, we would like you to join the finance committee now so that you can become acquainted with our processes before taking on the role of treasurer. If you have a financial background and are able to help, please contact Andy Colby. Please note that if more than one person steps forward, it is possible for you to split the responsibilities with someone else.

I also want to remind you that we need someone who is willing to serve as president of the congregation. Next year will be my last year and we need someone now who can be mentored to take over. If you have any interest in this role, please reach out to me.


Thank you very much for your continued support!

*Phil Dicken  
President*

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## Religious School Committee

The Religious School is very busy and not just with classes on Sundays and Tuesdays. In January, February, and March, we had field trips, grade-level Shabbat services, a mock wedding, and Reading with Ruach. April and May will bring more field trips and ***COLOR WARS***.

In March, our older teens participated in a weekend of education and lobbying on Capitol Hill. They urged Maryland Senators and Representatives to support LGBTQ+ rights, criminal justice, and gun control (among other issues). In April, the teens will share stories of their advocacy efforts with the congregation.

All year long, our students have been collecting money for various charities. Each grade set a tzedakah goal at the beginning of the school year. In the hallway of our temple's classroom wing, charts on the wall show the progress our students have made in reaching their goals. Check out their progress! Our students are doing great! Thank you, students and families!

Because we canceled Religious School on a Sunday this year due to the weather, Sunday Religious School will finish on **May 19**. There is still time to earn some end of the year awards:

- Shabbat Service Attendance – attending 10 or more services over the course of the year
- Hebrew Achievement – Pre-K/K - 3rd grade students who master 5 of the prayers that they were expected to learn, and 4th grade and higher students who master 10 of the prayers that they were expected to learn (mastery of a prayer is determined by the Rabbi)
- Jewish Reading – reading at least 10 Jewish books over the course of the year
- Text of the Week (for students who, during the year, complete at least 10 of the Rabbi's sheets).

And every month, students can be recognized for being a mensch.

You can be a mensch by joining the Religious School Committee! Our next meeting in the synagogue will be on **April 14** at 12:15pm.

*L'Shalom,*

The Religious School Committee

### Religious School Calendar

April 2	
April 7	<b>No School</b>
April 9	April 16
April 14	April 21
April 28	April 23
April 30	
My 5	
May 7	
May 12	
May 14 (last Tuesday)	
May 19 (last Sunday)	

### Teacher Appreciation

We hope you will join us at 7:30pm on Friday, **May 10** at Shabbat services for a chance to thank our teachers for all their hard work over the year.

## *Keeping Up With Or Chadash*

### **Kiddish Kids, Jr. CORY, CORY**

There are some great programs coming up for the youth groups at Congregation Or Chadash. Be sure to watch your inbox for emails about the upcoming events! If you have any questions about any of the youth groups, please email Hannah Robin at [orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com](mailto:orchadashyouthadvisor1@gmail.com). Here is an overview of the events for April and May!

Kiddish Kids will be having Havdallah and going to SkyZone on Saturday, **April 6** from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. We will also be having an Israel Day at Congregation Or Chadash on Saturday, **May 4** from 3:30pm to 6:00pm. I hope to see you there!

Jr. CORY will be going to SkyZone on Sunday, **April 28** from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. We will also be having an Israel Day at Congregation Or Chadash on Sunday, **May 5** from 12:00pm to 3:00pm.

CORY will be meeting on Sunday, **April 7** from 12:00pm to 1:00pm at Congregation Or Chadash. Pineapple pizza will be served and we will discuss our upcoming events. We will be having a day in Washington, DC on Sunday, **April 14** starting at 12:00pm, and we will discuss run times at the meeting. We will also be having an event in May that we will discuss at the meeting on **April 7**.

### **Calendar Meeting**

Calling anyone who is a leader of a committee, someone who helps plan Temple events, new members or not-so-new members, or anyone curious about the Temple calendar... this is for you! **May 15** at 7:30!! This is our opportunity to come together as a group to plan the calendar for the upcoming year. If you have events you wish to have added to the Temple calendar, but cannot attend the meeting, please let Rabbi Kobey know of your event and preferred dates / times to be sure it can be part of the master calendar plan.

### **Annual Meeting**

Our annual meeting will be held Wednesday, **May 22** at 7:30pm in the Sanctuary. We will be voting on our annual budget and the board of directors' slate. If you are unable to attend, please send in your proxy vote.

### **Passover Seder to House or be Housed**

The first Seder is Friday, **April 19** and the second Seder is Saturday, **April 20**. Are you hosting a Seder either night and willing / able to host extra people? Are you looking for a Seder to attend? As soon as you know your plans, please contact the Temple office so that we have ample time to help make matches and ensure that everyone has a place for Seder!!

Please send an e-mail to [orchadashadmin@gmail.com](mailto:orchadashadmin@gmail.com) with how many people you can host or how many people you wish for someone else to host, any food allergies, any pets, prefer with children / prefer no children, etc. Together, we will make sure that everyone is part of a Seder! I would love if EVERYONE responded to this request - either because you need a place for Seder or because you can host.

### **Talmud Study**

For specific topics, please let Rabbi Kobey know that you are interested in Talmud class and she will add you to the distribution list.

Saturday, **April 20** – 11:00am  
 Saturday, **April 27** – 11:00am  
 Tuesday, **May 21** – 7:15pm  
 Saturday, **May 25** – 11:00am

## From the Library Committee

Our new library shelves are up and filled with books! Many thanks to Adam Kerner who helped us select the shelves and who put them all together, with assistance from our committee members. We now have room for all of our books and for many new ones as well -- come on by and take a look. Also, with Passover approaching, feel free to look at our collection of Haggadot. We have a wide variety of Haggadas which you are welcome to peruse and borrow, if you are looking for something different for your Seder. The Haggadas are on the shelves next to the windows, the fourth shelf up from the floor. Unlike our other books, you do not sign-out the Haggadahs -- just take what you need and return them after Passover.



## Or Chadash Book Club Schedule

**May 10:** The Marriage of Opposites: A Novel  
by Alice Hoffman

**June 14:** Planning for 2018-2019

All meetings start at 11:30am and are on the second Friday of the month unless there is a holiday or special event. Meeting location can vary but is usually Panera, 19965 Century Boulevard, Germantown.

All books on this year's schedule are available at the Montgomery County Public Libraries.

Contact Jane Harris at [clamityjgh@aol.com](mailto:clamityjgh@aol.com) to RSVP for the meeting or to be added to the email list for meeting reminders.



## Adult Social Group

Hello, everyone. We had a wonderful Shabbat dinner at the Breuer's house on Friday, **February 1**, and we will be having a co-birthday dinner, for Craig Held & Joe Baum Sunday, **March 31**, at Il Porto Restaurant in Gaithersburg.

On Saturday, **April 20**, we will be celebrating the 2nd night of Passover at Woodside Deli. They will provide us with a Passover style menu (soup, entree, vegetable, latke, tzimmes and drink) for \$20.95 plus tax and tip and we will be supplying the matzo, eggs, gefilte fish, dessert, and charoset for \$5.00 per person. This event will be open to all family members as well as any friends that you may want to invite. Each person pays for their meal directly to the restaurant. RSVP to Joe Baum at [jesaz99@aol.com](mailto:jesaz99@aol.com).

On Friday, **May 3**, we will have our quarterly Shabbat dinner at the home of Luis & Ruth Fajner. This will be our 1<sup>st</sup> dairy/pareve Shabbat dinner. We will also have another Jewish Trivia game as well as a conversation on current topics concerning Judaism in the US as well as the world. RSVP to Joe Baum at [jesaz99@aol.com](mailto:jesaz99@aol.com).

Thank you,  
*Joe Baum*

## End of Box Tops Collection

We have been informed by the Box Tops program that Congregation Or Chadash is no longer eligible to participate in the program. Thank you for your past support.



## Fundraising Committee News

Thanks to everyone who came and supported the Temple Fundraisers last year. Together, we raised over \$5,000!

It truly takes a “village” to maintain our beautiful facility and pay our expenses. We can’t do it without you! Come and be a part of the fun -- join a committee & get involved!

As you may know, we have our MAIN fundraiser this year on Saturday, **March 30**. It’s a Bingo Night and it’s open to the whole family....Bingo, games and fun food.

Also, there is the possibility of a fundraising Progressive Dinner in the spring... Watch for details soon!

Be well...  
*Debbie Lessans*  
*Melissa Lebedinsky*  
Fundraising Chairs

## *Special Services*

### Celebrating Simchas (Happy Occasions)

Celebrate your birthday with your Or Chadash family. Be called to the bimah and receive a special blessing and a birthday treat to mark the occasion. We have birthday blessings every month. For the upcoming months, come on Friday, **April 12** and Friday, **May 10** at 7:30pm.

We also celebrate anniversaries within our Or Chadash family. Again, be invited onto the bimah for a special blessing and fun anniversary treat. This is also monthly with anniversary blessings on Fridays at 7:30pm, **April 26** and **May 17**.

Do you have other simchas to share? Let Rabbi Kobey know, so we can rejoice together.

### Shavuot with Confirmation

Please join us Saturday evening, **June 8**, for an evening of dairy pot-luck dinner (at 6:00pm), Shavuot service with our fabulous Confirmands (at 7:00pm), and oneg with Jewish quiz bowl for all (after services). Stay tuned for more details.



## *Thank You to Our Donors*

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Thank you to our generous donors. Note that this list includes donations that were deposited during January, February, and early March. Please contact the office for more information.

### **General Donations**

Kolash Belite  
Irwin & Terri Binder  
Susan Gellert & the Bowers Cousins in memory  
of Charlie Gellert  
Rosyln Gordon

### **Building Mold Remediation**

Jesse Gellert  
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Ralph Locke & Lona Farhi

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

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Ralph Locke & Lona Farhi in honor of Robin  
Farquhar's special birthday  
Jeff Feiertag in honor of Jacob Felman's Bar  
Mitzvah  
Susan Gellert & the Bowers Cousins in  
memory of Charlie Gellert

## *Mazel Tov*

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Congregation Or Chadash extends our congratulations on the upcoming Bat Mitzvah of Madison Kwasny on Saturday, April 6.

Congregation Or Chadash extends our congratulations on the upcoming Bat Mitzvah of Gabrielle Dvoskin on Saturday, April 13.

Congregation Or Chadash extends our congratulations on the upcoming Bat Mitzvah of Emma Ward on Saturday, May 4.

Congregation Or Chadash extends our congratulations on the upcoming Bar Mitzvah of Joshua Wolfson on Saturday, May 18.

## *Condolences*

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Condolences to Maureen Ruskin on the death of her beloved mother, Barbara Ruskin, who died on February 18.

Condolences to Barbara Marx on the death of her beloved father, David Stein, who died on March 8.

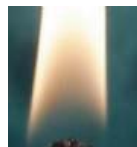
# Oneg Calendar

Thank you to our oneg sponsors! After every Shabbat service, there are delicious treats for everyone to enjoy as we all chat and catch up. Oneg sponsors bring food before the service or donate to our oneg organizer, so that this service is provided every week. Birthdays and anniversaries are great times to sponsor an oneg. Family yartzeits are another meaningful time to sponsor an oneg.

**All** families are expected to host approximately twice a year. Each sponsor will receive an email indicating what food and drinks to bring on their designated Shabbat date. If you have any questions, please email Julie Swain at [juliebs1@aol.com](mailto:juliebs1@aol.com) or call 301-916-9214.

Saturday, April 6	10:00 AM	Bat Mitzvah of Madison Kwasny	Karen & Richard Kwasny
Friday, April 12	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service with Birthday Blessings	Randi & Matt Dwoskin
Saturday, April 13	10:00 AM	Bat Mitzvah of Gabrielle Dwoskin	Randi & Matt Dwoskin
Friday, April 19	5:00 PM	Short Shabbat Service	No Oneg
Friday, April 26	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service with Or Chadash Singers & Anniversary Blessings	Mindy & Alan Nagler Ellyn & Joe Baum
Saturday, May 4	10:00 AM	Bat Mitzvah of Emma Ward	Rebecca Ward and Family
Friday, May 10	7:30 PM	Teacher Appreciation Shabbat with Birthday Blessings and Game Night	Susan & Scott Chidakel Mandy Eisemann & Ly Peang-Meth
Friday, May 17	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service with Anniversary Blessings	Nancy & Scott Wolfson
Saturday May 18	10:00 AM	Bar Mitzvah of Joshua Wolfson	Nancy & Scott Wolfson
Friday May 24	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service	Donna & Coleman Clarke Lisa & Robert Lacritz
Saturday, June 1	9:00 AM	Shabbat Service with Birthday Blessings	Shared Oneg
Friday, June 7	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service	Sarah & Jay Friedman Sue & Richard Carr
Saturday, June 8	7:00 PM	Confirmation & Erev Shavuot Services	Confirmation Class
Friday, June 14	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service w/Anniversary Blessings	Rona & Milton Kandel Larry & Cindy Bender
Friday, June 21	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service	Erica & Matthew Keats Ron & Nancy Isaacson
Friday, June 28	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service	Marti & Adam Kerner Diane & Sydney Levitus
Saturday, July 6	9:00 AM	Shabbat Service	Shared Oneg

# Yahrzeits



If you have an upcoming yahrtzeit that is not listed, please call the office at 301-482-1025, and we will add any names you wish to remember. Names will be read at Shabbat services during the week of a loved one's death. When two dates are shown, the names will be read during the Friday evening and Saturday morning Shabbat services. Note that the second column lists the observing member.

### Saturday, April 6

Dorothy Paley	Mother of Linda Tharp
Hugo Wechter	Father of Ruth Fajner
Lee Caplan	Stephanie & Michael Ames
Ana Fajner	Mother of Luis Fajner

### Friday, April 12 & Saturday, April 13

**Dolly Grobstein	Mother of Claire SanNicolas
Samuel Rosenthal	Father of Cindy Bender

### Friday, April 19

Jon Clark Sr.	Father of Jon Clark
Jerome (Jerry) Kreger	Husband of Doreen Kreger
William Storck	Father of Dara Santa
Werner Fridberg	Father of Michelle Fridberg
Richard Gartenberg	Father of Jane Harris
B. Paul Heritage	Father of Robin Farquhar
Alice Lieberman	Grandmother of Daniel Rosenberg
Ted Petok	Father of Fred Petok

### Friday, April 26

Nahum Lebedinsky	Father of Alex Lebedinsky
Lawrence Arthur Young	Father of Gary Young
Marilyn Himmelfarb	Mother of Scott Himmelfarb
Norman Wickwire	Father of Alison Felrice
Amy Mandelbaum	Risa & Patrick Robinson
Rhoda Nagler	Mother of Alan Nagler
Maxine Converse	Mother of Cynthia Wolff
Audrey Dicken	Mother of Phil Dicken

### Saturday, May 4

Sol Jackel	Grandfather of Jonathan Jackel
Fred Lafer	Uncle of Ellyn Baum
Linda Wickwire	Mother of Alison Felrice
Charles Ogg	Brother of Karl Gussow
William Eisenberg	Father of Robert Eisenberg
Dorothy Grenadier	Great Aunt of Ellyn Baum

### Friday, May 10

Richard Spector	Friend of Michael Abrahams & Susan White
Bruce Gould	Uncle of Diane Levitus
Anna Zavin	Mother of Jack Zavin
Francis Carmody	Stepfather of Leslie Dicken

### Friday, May 17 & Saturday May 18

Harriet Morgan	Mother of Karen Kwasny
Ella Garfunkel	Grandmother of Diane Levitus
Dorothy Petok	Mother of Fred Petok

### Friday, May 24

Norman Lobsenz	Father of Michael Abrahams
Sybil Slong	Great-Aunt of Barbara Marx
Sharon Friedman	Mother of Jay Friedman
Sophie Blagman	Grandmother of Karl Gussow

### Saturday, June 1

Miriam Mitzi Greenburg	Father of Michael Abrahams
Donna Page	Sister of Debbie Lessans
Arnold Paley	Father-in-law of Ken Tharp
Joseph Page	Father of Debbie Lessans
Anne Farhi	Mother of Lona Farhi
**Linda Tharp	Wife of Ken Tharp
Marvin Lansat	Father of Howard Lansat
Florence Tropp	Grandmother of Anne Gussow
Josephine Schwartz	Mother of Brenda Bass
Nedda Wolff	Mother of Mark Wolff



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